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AN ORGANIZATION REVIEW
OF
ALBERTA EDUCATION

F I N A L R E P O R T

June 29, 1982

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TOUCHE ROSS & PARTNERS

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS 3500 SCOTIA CENTRE, 700-2ND STREET S.W., CALGARY, CANADA T2P 2W2. (403) 263-4800

June 29, 1982

Dr. R. A. Bosetti
Deputy Minister
Alberta Education
10th Floor, Devonian Building
11160 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 0L2

Dear Dr. Bosetti:

We are pleased to submit our final report entitled "An Organization Review of Alberta Education". This document contains our assessment of the current state of the organization and our recommendations for improvements.

The focus of parts of the report is of necessity on perceived problem areas. There is therefore a risk that it may create an unbalanced and somewhat negative impression of the present operations of the Department. It is essential to stress that the Department discharges its complex and diverse responsibilities admirably. That it has recognised a concern over organization structure, and clearly intends to take action to improve effectiveness and efficiency, is equally admirable.

Throughout the course of the study, we have been pleased with the high degree of cooperation from Department staff, and we have been impressed with the evident desire for improvement. Our being given the valuable opportunity to be a party to the Steering Committee, Department, and stakeholder group meetings was in our view a sign of the positive approach of the Department to the whole exercise of organization review and restructuring.

.../2

June 29, 1982

We have very much enjoyed working on this professionally challenging assignment. We trust that this report will meet your needs and hope we may have the opportunity to work with you again.

Sincerely,

TOUCHE ROSS & PARTNERS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ECP', written in a cursive style.

E. Courtney Pratt
Partner

ECP/mg

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APPENDICES

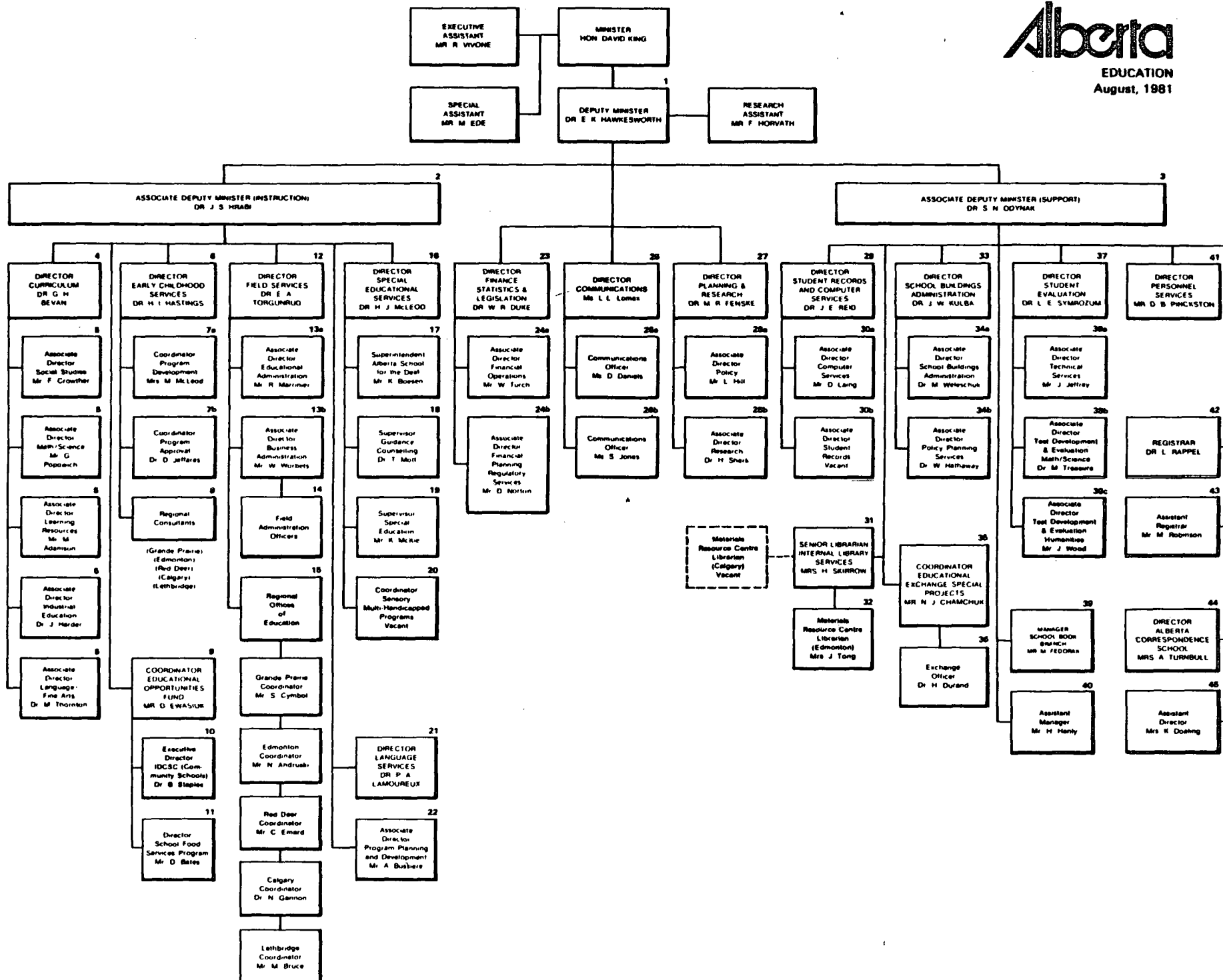
- A. LIST OF ALBERTA EDUCATION PERSONNEL INTERVIEWED
- B. LIST OF STAKEHOLDER GROUP REPRESENTATIVES INTERVIEWED

I INTRODUCTION

Alberta Education is a large Department consisting of a diverse group of branches, each contributing in some way to the improvement and maintenance of education for Alberta children from early childhood to Grade 12. The Department's activities and responsibilities have increased greatly over the last ten years, and during that time new branches and management responsibilities have been added in several areas, largely on an ad hoc basis. During this period of growth the organization has not undertaken any form of comprehensive review or restructuring.

The current organization (see Exhibit 1) has a central office in Edmonton, and within this office are the heads of every branch of the Department. The administrative organization is headed by the Deputy Minister, who reports to the Minister of Education, and is directly assisted by two Associate Deputy Ministers (Instruction and Support). The Department contains 13 Director-level positions. The Directors report through an Associate Deputy Minister to the Deputy Minister, with the exception of three which report directly to the Deputy: Director of Finance, Statistics and Legislation; Director of Planning and Research; and Director of Communications. (The Communications Branch is seconded to Alberta Education from Alberta Government Services). Alberta Education also maintains five regional offices in Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, Grande Prairie and Lethbridge. Each of these is headed by a Coordinator and is staffed by consultants with specific subject area expertise. The Department is also responsible for the administration of the School for the Deaf and the Alberta Correspondence School.

The question of a review and restructuring of the organization was discussed at the Department's annual planning meeting last year. At that time, it was decided that such a review would be deferred until the appointment of a new Deputy Minister. The Deputy Minister, shortly after his appointment in April, 1982 established the Steering Committee for the Reorganization of Alberta Education, consisting of Dr. S. N. Odynak, Associate Deputy Minister - Support Services (Chairman); along with Dr. J. S. Hrabí, Associate Deputy Minister - Instruction; N. J. Andruski, Coordinator of the Edmonton Regional Office; Dr. W. R. Duke, Director of Finance, Statistics and Legislation; and Dr. M. R. Fenske, Director of Planning and Research. In pursuance of its mandate, the Committee appointed three university-based consultants to carry out a participative data collection process and to prepare a report containing recommendations for the new structure.



In addition to these internal activities, the Deputy Minister engaged Touche Ross & Partners to carry out an independent, third-party review. Such a review was intended to give the Minister, the Deputy Minister and others within the Department an additional perspective as input to the decision on a new organizational model.

In this report on our review, we clarify the objectives of the assignment, give details of the work program we followed, and examine a model for organizational effectiveness. Following this, we give our assessment of the current organization, and present our conclusions and recommendations for the reorganization of Alberta Education. Finally implementation issues are identified.

II OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of this study were:

- * To assess the current organization structure of Alberta Education;
- * To develop recommendations for structural change which will enhance the Department's effectiveness and efficiency; and,
- * To identify issues relating to management style, decision-making processes, management skills, and implementation of our recommendations.

The objectives of this report are:

- * To provide an additional, external point of view with regard to the organization of Alberta Education;
- * To assist the Minister, the Deputy Minister and others within the Department in determining the conceptual model of organization to be adopted for Alberta Education.

III WORK PROGRAM

Working under the direction of Mr. E. Courtney Pratt, Partner responsible for Human Resource and Organization Services in Alberta, our project team consisted of three members of the Touche Ross & Partners consulting practice.

In carrying out the project, we made use of the data collected by the university-based consultants for the Steering Committee. We also attended the in-house and stakeholder group meetings at which the Steering Committee's report was discussed. However, we also considered it essential to collect data independently from sources external to the Department, as well as from within the organization, as the basis for developing own recommendations.

Our proposal for this assignment was submitted May 5, 1982 and the deadline for delivery of this report was late June, 1982. To complete the project within this time frame, we developed a work program comprised of eight main tasks as follows:

Task 1 - Project Start-up and Review of Relevant Documentation

Following approval of our proposal, and project start-up meetings with the Deputy Minister and the Steering Committee, we reviewed relevant documentation from the Department. This included previous annual reports, position descriptions and three Steering Committee papers:

- . Economic and Social Goals of Government - Implications for Alberta Education;
- . Alberta Education Organization Principles and Desired Characteristics; and,
- . Alberta Education Purpose, Goals, Objectives and Policy Areas.

Task 2 - Interviews with Key Department Personnel

To obtain an in-depth understanding of the functions and effectiveness of the organization, we conducted personal interviews with well over 30 key members of the Department. For the most part, the interviews were held with people at management level, but we also spoke with several Department consultants and coordinators. This group of interview subjects was broader than we had originally proposed, but we felt it was important to our understanding of the current organization. A list of individuals interviewed is contained in Appendix A of this report.

Task 3 - Interviews with Stakeholders

This task was included to gain an external assessment of Alberta Education through the eyes of the "stakeholder" groups who are most familiar with the services offered by the Department. These included interviews with senior representatives of the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, the Association of School Business Officials of Alberta, and the Home and School Association. A list of stakeholders interviewed appears in Appendix B of this report.

Task 4 - Review of Structure of Other Relevant Organizations

This task was included to give us a picture of how other Departments have addressed organizational issues, and to help us learn from other models. We examined the organizational structures of other Alberta Government Departments, as well as the Departments of Education in other Provinces.

Task 5 - Analysis of Data and Identification of Key Issues

The consulting team reviewed all the data collected by us and by the Steering Committee's university consultants to identify key problems or issues which could and should be addressed through organizational restructuring.

Task 6 - Attendance at Steering Committee, Department, and Stakeholder Meetings

Touche Ross representatives attended meetings of the Steering Committee and other Department officials, as well as a discussion meeting with representatives of stakeholder groups. These were valuable opportunities for us to hear and assess the observations of these key people about the review and restructuring proposals of the Steering Committee.

Task 7 - Development and Assessment of Structural Alternatives

Several alternatives were developed and then assessed to determine their ability to address major organizational issues, along with the associated implications of their implementation. The preferred alternatives were reviewed with the Deputy Minister. We delayed finalization of our recommendations until after the Department's meeting with stakeholder group representatives because we saw their contribution as highly significant.

Task 8 - Preparation and Presentation of Final Report

A presentation on the content of our Report was prepared for the Minister, the Deputy Minister, and the Steering Committee, before being presented in this final written form.

IV A MODEL OF ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Before proceeding with an analysis of Alberta Education, it is important to define what we mean by effectiveness within an organization. Exhibit 11 depicts a model of organizational effectiveness which we have developed. A model such as this provides a frame-work for reviewing an organization by identifying areas to be examined. The model has three main components:

- * Environment
- * People
- * Organization

Each of these components has significant impact on the ability of the organization to function successfully and to meet its objectives. The focus of this study has been on the organization component, which has a number of sub-elements which are described later. The nature of each of the components is described below, and in the following section we comment specifically on each component in the context of Alberta Education.

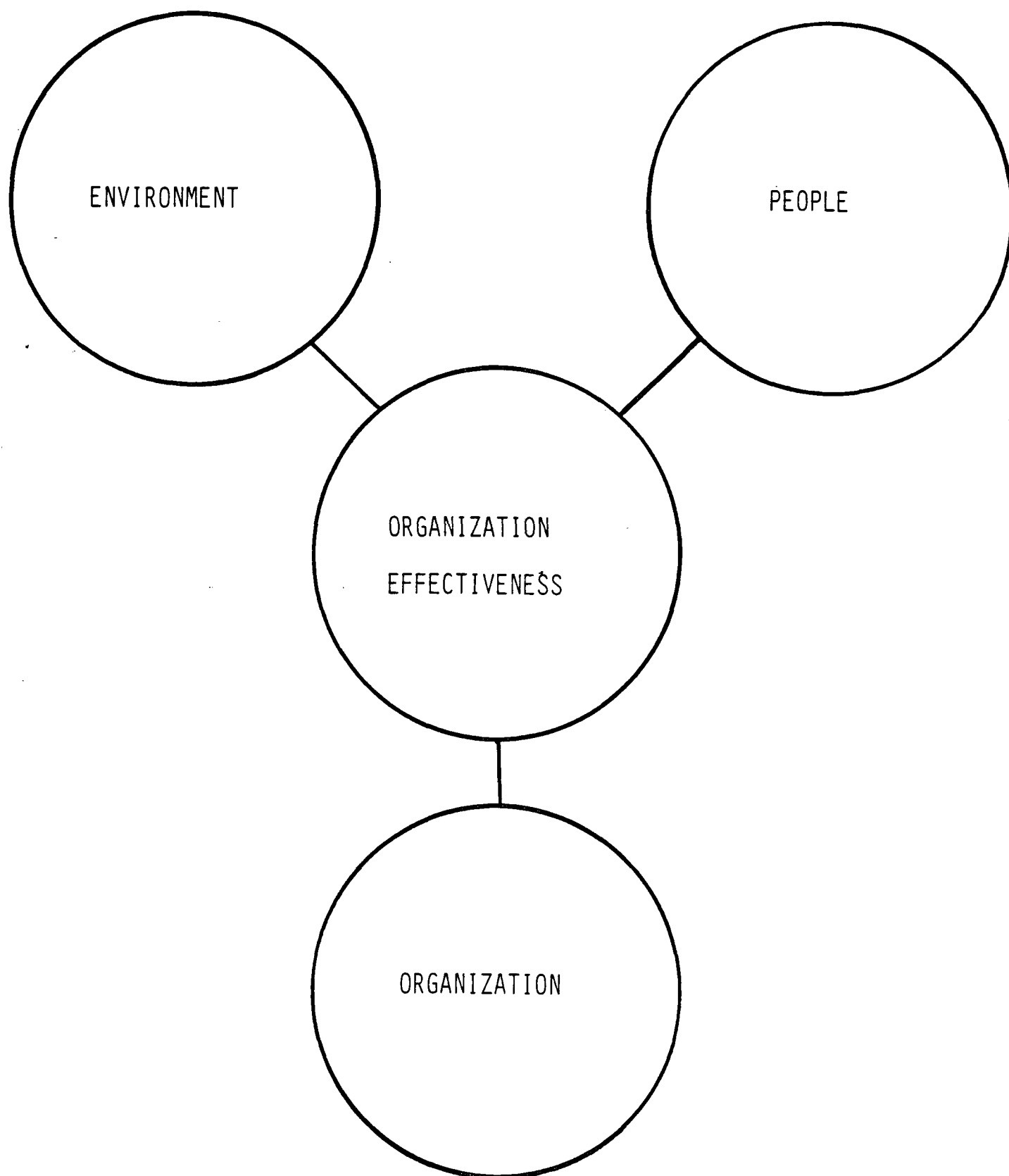
A. ENVIRONMENT

In analyzing organizational effectiveness, it is essential to understand the external conditions in which the organization exists and operates. In most cases, the environment is a given and is not subject to change by the organization itself. Impact of environment on organizational effectiveness varies considerably among organizations. However, it is always important to understand this impact in identifying realistic definitions of, and targets for, organizational effectiveness.

B. PEOPLE

Effectiveness is to a large extent determined by the people working within an organization. Their combined skills, abilities, training and experience, and their adequacy and appropriateness for the organization must be understood. Important gaps or inadequacies in human resource requirements must be identified, and then it must be determined whether change is possible within the short or medium term. Structural options that are available to an organization can often be limited by this important factor.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS



C. ORGANIZATION

The organization component is depicted graphically in Exhibit III. It has five elements:

- * Objectives
- * Levels of Service and Structure
- * Roles, Responsibilities, and Authority
- * Management Systems
- * Management Style

Each of these is discussed below.

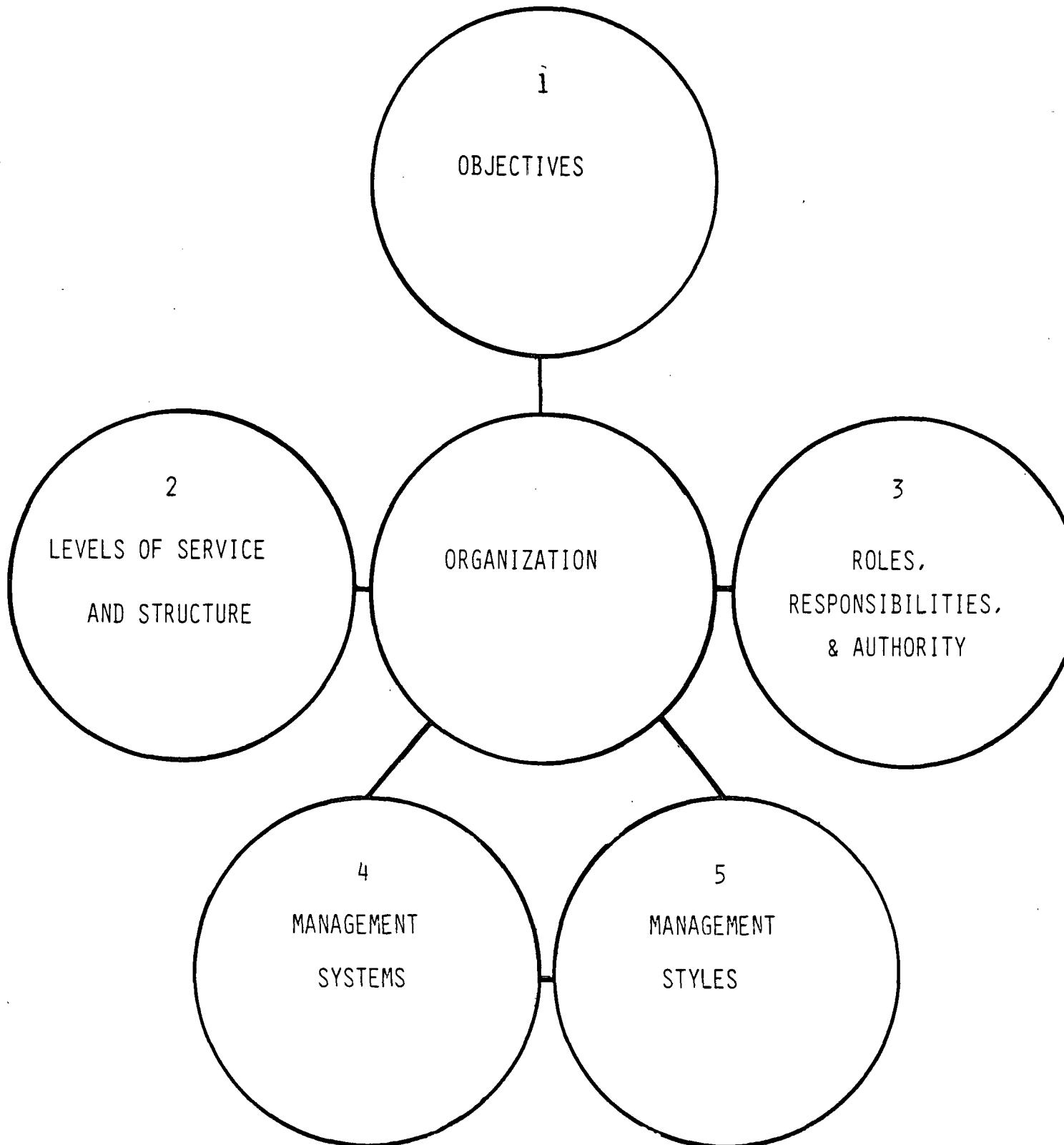
1. Objectives

The degree to which an organization has a meaningful statement of purpose or mission statement, supported by a clear and consistent set of goals or objectives has a significant impact on organizational effectiveness. In fact, it is difficult to address the issue of organizational effectiveness if objectives are not clear. For it is an organization's ability to meet its stated objectives that constitutes the whole notion of organizational effectiveness. An additional element required to promote achievement of the organization's role and objectives is a strategic plan outlining how the organization will develop in at least the medium-term future.

2. Levels of Service and Structure

A clear definition of the levels of service should follow consistently from the organization's objectives. Levels of service define what the organization actually does (the services it provides) and in what degree and scope. This definition of functions then is translated into an overall organizational structure, including functional groupings and staff numbers required to support the defined service levels. This element addresses the issue of allocation of human resources within an organization.

ORGANIZATION



3. Roles, Responsibilities, and Authority

Once overall organizational structure has been reviewed, it is then important to examine the degree to which roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined and assigned. The appropriateness of the scope of key positions should be reviewed. The span of control of senior management in terms of one-on-one relationships is often an important issue to be addressed. As important as the allocation of responsibilities is an examination of the degree to which individuals are delegated the appropriate authority to meet those responsibilities.

4. Management Systems

Management systems are often seen as the glue that binds an organization together. Organizational effectiveness is significantly hampered if the following management systems are not adequate to support planning and monitoring functions:

- * Management information systems (financial and operating data)
- * Resource allocation systems
- * Personnel management systems, including performance appraisal and compensation
- * Linking mechanisms

5. Management Styles

In examining management style, we are not looking at individual managers' traits, except perhaps the most senior managers and the impact which their style has on the organization. Primarily, we review general approaches to management and their impact on the organization's ability to function, as well as their appropriateness to the type of organization. Among the aspects of general style which are often important are:

- * Centralized vs. decentralized
- * Participative vs. consultative vs. autocratic
- * Decision-making concentrated at the top vs. spread throughout an organization.

Our explanation of this model is in support of the following section, in which we examine Alberta Education in terms of each of the components or elements described above.

V ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT ORGANIZATION

In this section we examine Alberta Education in terms of each of the components of organizational effectiveness described in the previous section:

- * Environment
- * People
- * Organization

A. ENVIRONMENT

Several key environmental factors must be taken into account when considering the organization effectiveness of Alberta Education. Some of these are internal and endemic to the Provincial Government, while others are determined by the society the Department serves:

- * One of the environmental factors, which is changeable and which requires various levels of responsiveness from within the Department's organization, is the range of pressures exerted from outside Alberta Education. These pressures are usually in the form of requests for action or changes in departmental policy relating to specific areas of education. These kinds of influences come from special interest groups, "stakeholder" organizations, parents of students, and school jurisdictions with various needs. It is important to note the strong views and the high education level and sophistication of many individuals seeking to influence Alberta Education. The organization must be able to assess and respond appropriately to these demands while maintaining a predetermined level of service.
- * Alberta Education is a high profile Department of the Provincial Government, and as such must always be aware that any policies or practices followed will be visible and of extreme interest to a large number of Albertans. Education is a subject which arouses a number of different opinions and controversy, exerting pressure on those Department officials who must be conscious of the political importance and sensitivity of many of their actions.

- * The general goals, objectives, policies and legislation of the Provincial Government also have an impact. Alberta Education must be flexible enough to respond to changes of priority and emphasis and to convert them into service delivery.
- * The Alberta Government's centralized approach in certain areas has created a situation in which many members of management feel the systems are not adaptable to their special needs. They also feel that the externally imposed systems hamper their ability to manage the manpower and resources applied to delivering the education services required. The support services of Personnel and Communications may be considered examples of this environmental factor. These government-wide systems are not within the scope of a review such as this, and therefore must be accepted as an environmental factor unlikely to change in the near future. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report have been designed to accommodate this assumption.
- * All public sector/service organizations must cope with the increasing demands for service at a time when manpower, financial and other resources are becoming scarce. The impact of this situation, and the management problem which it creates, are particularly acute in the field of Education.

B. PEOPLE

Although an examination of the qualifications and performance of individuals in key positions was not part of this assignment, we feel it is worth noting three observations about the management group:

- * First, there appears to have been a consistent tendency to fill management positions (and in many cases positions below that level) with individuals having markedly similar backgrounds. These individuals have similar working experience, and the majority of them have been educated at the same institutions.
- * Second, most individuals in management positions have long tenure with the Department.

- * Third, many of the senior management positions are currently occupied by individuals who are within two to five years of pension eligibility. This will mean that within that time there may be an almost total change in senior management. A management succession problem exists.

We believe that the above situation negatively affects the perceptions of many within and outside of Alberta Education about the Department's capability to make any organizational restructuring effective. On the other hand, there is a perception that both the Minister and the Deputy Minister want, and are committed to, significant change.

C. ORGANIZATION

The current organization may be assessed in terms of each of the following elements illustrated in Exhibit III:

1. Objectives
2. Structure and Level of Services
3. Roles, Responsibilities and Authority
4. Management Systems
5. Management Styles

1. Objectives

- * While Alberta Education recognizes its general purpose, it has not in the past developed and adopted a set of supporting departmental or operational objectives. We recognize the difficulty of such a task, and we fully support the efforts of the current Steering Committee for the Reorganization of Alberta Education in this area.
- * There is an apparent lack of consensus among representatives of the stakeholder groups about the overall role of the Department. This appears to be due to the concern of each group that Alberta Education meet its unique requirements.

- * Because the Department lacks a clear set of overall objectives, it has developed a tendency to concentrate on specific activities rather than on operational goals. The Department's Annual Report illustrates this tendency. These activities are often performed by groups working in isolation and responding to immediate service needs. These groups also tend to establish their own priorities, which may not be consistent with those of the rest of the Department. There does not seem to be a sense of common effort toward an end result, and this is particularly evident in decentralized functions such as the Regional Offices.
- * Several areas of the Department are experiencing difficulty in setting priorities and determining relative emphasis. This appears due to the concentration on activity in service delivery without a sense of working toward Departmental objectives. Again, the Regional Offices face particular problems in this regard.
- * All of the above concerns about objectives have inhibited the ability of management to participate in strategic planning for the Department. Without clear objectives and priorities, strategic planning is a relatively meaningless process.

2. Levels of Service and Structure

The structure of the current organization as shown earlier in Exhibit I, has a number of weaknesses which affect the level of service offered. We have assessed the broad issue of service levels and allocation of functions to administrative units. An examination of the important issue of staffing requirements was not within the scope of this study.

- * Two positions of Associate Deputy Minister are insufficient to handle the senior administrative and coordinating responsibilities of a department of this size, or to permit sufficient involvement in top-level planning. Most comparable Alberta Government Departments have three or four persons at this level. Such a sharp pyramid structure has the tendency to slow down decision-making processes of an operational as well as policy nature and to create bottlenecks. This creates frustration in staff at lower levels, in addition to having a negative impact on efficiency and effectiveness.

- * Unrelated functions within the Department are often grouped together, or related functions are separated and appear isolated from each other. This makes coordination, team efforts, common goal setting, and cooperation difficult. For example, one Associate Deputy Minister is responsible for a wide variety of support services, along with evaluation services for students and two areas facilitating educational development - the Alberta Correspondence School and the Educational Exchange program.
- * Although there is universal agreement among those interviewed about the need for an increased number of Associate Deputy Minister level positions, there was no consensus on the number required, or on how functional areas should be grouped under these positions.
- * Certain branches within the Department raise specific concerns regarding their ability to provide a level of service sufficient to meet Departmental needs:
 - . The resources devoted to the Legislation function are not adequate to provide the high level of coordination required in a Department like Alberta Education.
 - . Some members of management feel Personnel policies and practices do not always meet their individual needs; however, as discussed earlier, we believe this is an environmental issue, and not subject to meaningful change in the near future.
 - . The Department has not developed its own internal audit function.
 - . The Planning and Research section appears to operate in an inappropriately restricted fashion, taking primarily a reactive rather than a proactive role.
 - . No single position within the organization (other than the Deputy Minister) is responsible for coordination of planning on a Department-wide scale.
 - . The responsibilities of the Educational Exchange section have diminished during the recent past, and the section appears not to require its own administrative unit.

- . The Coordinator of the Educational Opportunities Fund has taken on two responsibilities which do not relate directly to the Fund, the school meals administration and the coordination of the community schools committee.
- . There is no apparent rationale for including administration of the School for the Deaf or the Alberta Correspondence School within the current organization structure of Alberta Education.
- * Alberta Education has a high degree of interaction with the public, and a large portion of that is supplying information to citizens on various matters. There is no central location for disseminating such information; therefore, members of the public must often contact more than one Department official to receive the required answer.
- * As in many other public sector organizations and Departments, there is no sense in Alberta Education that the human, financial and other resources belong to the organization as a whole. In fact, resources tend to be retained within branches and regarded parochially. There is no planned comprehensive annual review of the allocation of resources throughout the Department on the basis of priorities of services to be provided. Therefore, maximum effective use has not been made of the total resources available. We see this as a particular concern given what has been said about the dynamic and changing environment in which Alberta Education operates and the need for the Department to respond to its environment quickly.

3. Roles, Responsibility and Authority

The inconsistency in functional groupings mentioned above also applies to the definition of roles, and to the application of responsibility and authority levels.

- * It is noticeable that there is an inconsistent application of authority from section to section within the Department. In some areas, managers wish to have more discretion to make decisions, to delegate, or to initiate action. By contrast, other areas appear to be headed by managers who currently exercise a high degree of authority for decision-making. Overall, there appears to be a lack of delegation of authority for making operating decisions.

- * Some branches have significantly more independence and authority than others, and do not appear to be integrated with Department operations. The Early Childhood Services Program has a high degree of independence and a different style of managing its consultants. Although this section appears to be functioning well, there appears to be limited accountability to senior management and to the Department as a whole. Special Education consultants work independently under their own Director based in Central Office.
- * Regional Office staffs do not have a clear delineation of priorities within their roles. There is perceived difficulty in providing field evaluative services while also attempting to deliver the consultative services. The inherent conflict between the consultative and evaluative roles must be examined, and the type of evaluative role to be filled needs to be defined. This may include the way individuals conduct evaluation, or the use in the field of words with negative connotations such as "inspector". We also note the concern of Regional Office staff over the degree to which they are used as staff for Central Office projects.
- * Several branches feel isolated from decisions which directly affect their operations; for example, the School Book Branch and the Alberta Correspondence School.
- * There appears to be a lack of understanding among management of the Department's role in policy making. In our view, this confusion in the management group as to the Department's role in this area has meant that policy development requirements have not been adequately met. This lack of understanding extends to the difference between the various tiers of policy and between policy and operational decision-making.

4. Management Systems

Although it appears that financial information and financial management are strong, other systems of management within the Department require improvements:

- * Management information systems generally are inadequate for purposes of program planning and monitoring. While there is general agreement that considerable data are collected and stored, little useful information is available.

- * Resource allocation processes are generally based on previous year's allocation plus some increment. There is a lack of ongoing challenge of the continuing relevance of programs and projects. Such an approach to resource allocation preserves the status quo.
- * Personnel management systems are a constraint in terms of the Department's ability to motivate staff; as indicated earlier, this should be seen as primarily an environmental issue. We do, however, wish to note that the personal planning component of MPAS appears to be taken seriously and done well.
- * For an organization like Alberta Education, mechanisms linking internal components of the organization and linking the organization with external groups should be strong. We believe that there is a need to strengthen this aspect of management systems. In this regard, we support the move from a Directors' Council to a more meaningful and manageable Education Officials' Committee. The approach being taken to the reorganization process indicates to us senior management's commitment to improved linking mechanisms.
- * We indicated above, it is our view that financial control systems are strong. However, should the Department move to a more decentralized form of decision-making, then additional control systems must be developed. Decentralization without such systems could lead to major problems for Alberta Education.

5. Management Styles

The current management style within the organization is characterized by several factors:

- * The management structure is highly centralized, with the decision-making of an operational and policy-making nature concentrated mainly at the top. There is a tendency to impose decisions from the top downward.
- * People have developed a heavy dependency on regulations as the primary basis for decision-making and management.
- * There is a sense that management has tended to be reactive to specific problems or areas, and not proactive or anticipatory.
- * Many Department managers and branches have developed an independent, rather than "interdependent" approach.

The above represents our assessment of the current organization in the context of our model. We wish to emphasize again that although we have identified a number of problems and issues, we have done so in the perspective of opportunities for improvement. We also wish to re-state here that there are a number of very positive aspects of the organization which have not been identified in this section.

VI KEY OBJECTIVES FOR REORGANIZATION

It is essential to identify those objectives which are primary or will take precedence in assessing alternative organization structures. We believe the following to be the key objectives in the reorganization of Alberta Education:

- * The groupings of functional areas under senior managers must be logical, and must represent compatible administrative units.
- * In moving functional areas into new groupings, consideration should be given to allocating manageable and relatively equitable workloads to senior managers.
- * The new organization structure must reflect an increased functional emphasis on planning and evaluation.
- * The new organization must be able to adapt quickly to a dynamic environment and shifting priorities by allocating resources appropriately.
- * The ability of the Department to meet its objectives will require planned coordination of departmental decision-making and management activities, which will involve all those with a stake in decisions.
- * Within a system of management controls, there will be a need for a greater delegation of authority for decision-making (primarily to Regional Offices and school jurisdictions) than exists in the current organization.
- * The acceptance of the reorganization will be heavily dependent upon a clear demonstration to those within and external to the Department that structural changes will be accompanied by appropriate changes in approach and management style.

VII RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section we present our conceptual model of the reorganization of Alberta Education. We do not provide recommendations on the required staff levels or the titles of management positions below the level of Assistant Deputy Minister. A model to such a level of detail was beyond the scope of this project. Our model has been developed to the level of the administrative units in the reorganized structure, recognizing that the next level of detailed analysis may suggest some combining or consolidation of these units. We have depicted our proposed structure in Exhibit IV.

The major overall characteristics of the structure are:

- * We recommend that two more Associate Deputy Minister level positions be created, to bring to a total of 4 the number of Associate Deputy Ministers reporting to the Deputy Minister.
- * We also propose that the title of these positions be changed from "Associate" to "Assistant" Deputy Minister, to reflect the titles used by other Alberta government departments.
- * The functional groupings depicted in Exhibit IV are intended to be logical and balanced, and to reflect Department priorities, particularly as regards the Regional Offices and the planning and evaluation functions.
- * All support services functions are grouped together, and report through one Assistant Deputy Minister.
- * In addition to the four Assistant Deputy Ministers, two staff positions report directly to the Deputy Minister - the Director of Communications and the Executive Assistant.

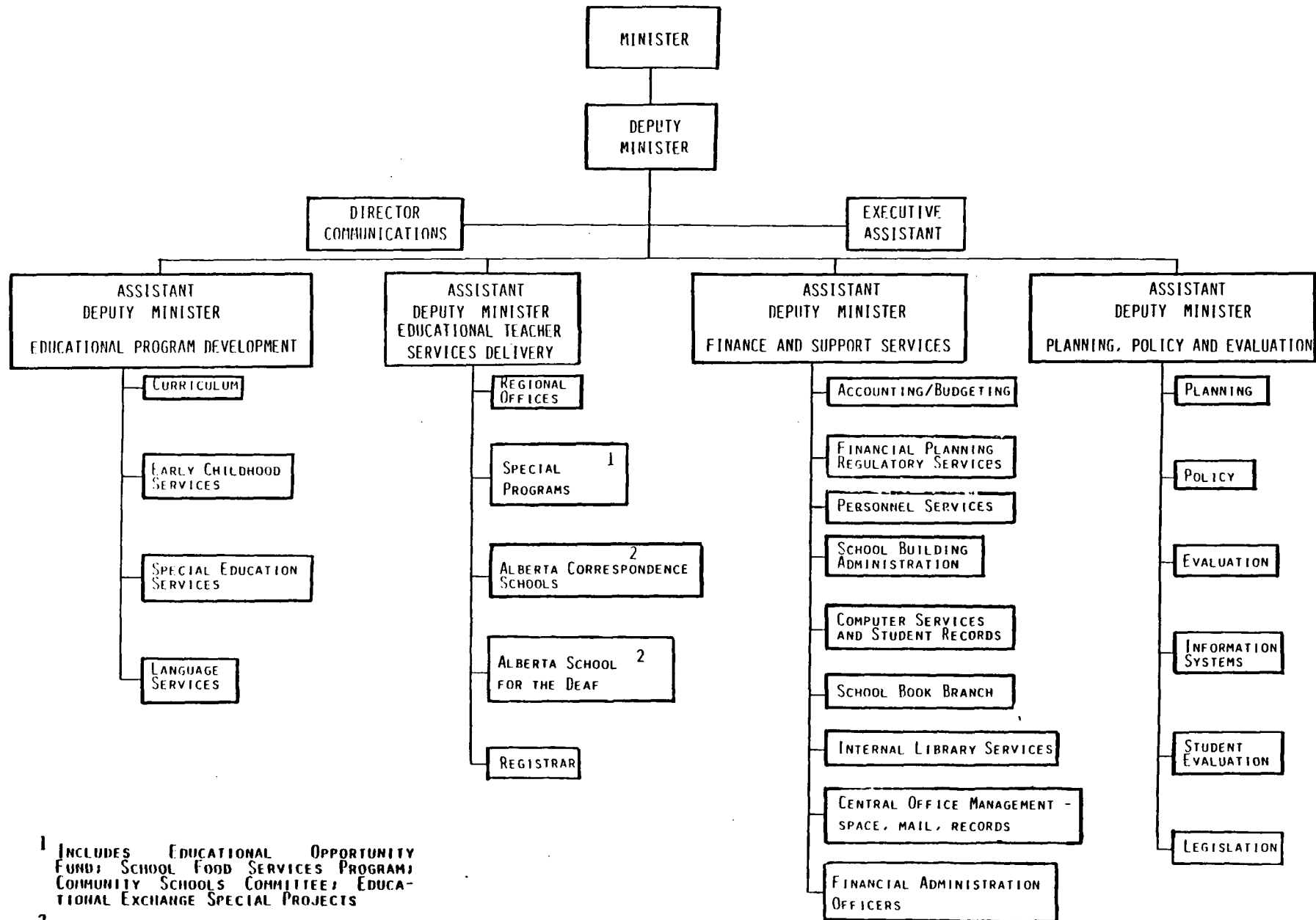
At this point, we will examine the functional and administrative characteristics of the groups under each of the four Assistant Deputy Ministers.

1. Assistant Deputy Minister, Educational Program Development

Under the proposed structure, this Assistant Deputy Minister would be responsible for administrative units called Curriculum, Early Childhood Services, Special Education Services, and Language Services.

PROPOSED DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURE

TOUCHE ROSS & PARTNERS



¹ INCLUDES EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FUND; SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES PROGRAM; COMMUNITY SCHOOLS COMMITTEE; EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE SPECIAL PROJECTS

² THIS RECOMMENDATION RELATES TO THE SHORT TERM. THESE ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED OUTSIDE OF THE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF ALBERTA EDUCATION

Within this division, we propose that the Curriculum Branch remain in its current state, and that the Assistant Deputy Minister be responsible for the program content development aspects of Early Childhood Services, Special Education, and Language Services.

It is significant to note the importance of the relationship of this division with the division responsible for educational services delivery. Later in this section we propose a means for linking this division with the service delivery arm of the Department.

2. Assistant Deputy Minister, Educational and Teacher Services Delivery

Under the proposed structure, this Assistant Deputy Minister would be responsible for the delivery of educational and teacher services through the Regional Offices, a Special Programs unit, the Alberta Correspondence School, the Alberta School for the Deaf, and the Registrar.

To reflect the increased importance and decision-making authority recommended for the Regional Offices, we propose to have the Regional Office heads report directly to the Assistant Deputy Minister. Currently they report to a Director who, in turn, reports to an Associate Deputy Minister with a considerable number of additional responsibilities and concerns.

All consultants who are based in Regional Offices would report directly to Regional Office heads, including the Early Childhood Services and subject area consultants. We recognize that this raises questions concerning relationships with central office, which we will address later in this section.

The proposed structure creates a new administrative unit encompassing all special program delivery functions. This would include the Educational Opportunity Fund, the School Food Services Program, the Community Schools Coordinating Committee, and the Educational Exchange/Special Projects.

Incorporating the reporting relationships of the Alberta Correspondence School and the School for the Deaf within this group is designed as a short term integration mechanism. We propose that these schools eventually move away from the management structure of Alberta Education toward more independent operating positions (eg. their own Boards) or within other structures.

Because of the nature of the Registrar's function as a teacher service, we recommend that it be included in a group oriented towards service delivery. We believe that the Department should also consider establishing the Materials Resource Centres, separate from the Internal Library function, within this services oriented division because of their service nature.

One of the objectives stated by a number of people for the reorganization has been a "flattening" of the structure. In our view, it is in this division that a new structure must meet this objective. In the key Regional Office reporting relationship, a layer of management has been removed. As well, the responsible Assistant Deputy Minister will have more time to devote to these offices, and we recommend strongly that a priority of this position be regular visits to the Regional Offices and to school jurisdictions.

We wish to note our earlier comments regarding the apparent consultation/evaluation conflict within this division. The dual roles are a necessary element of a number of Regional Office positions. If managed skillfully and positively, this need not be a major problem.

3. Assistant Deputy Minister, Finance and Support Services

This division includes the administrative units of: Accounting/Budgeting; Financial Planning and Regulatory Services; Personnel Services; School Buildings Administration; Computer Services and Student Records; School Book Branch; Internal Library Services; Financial (Field) Administration Officers; and Central Office Management.

For management purposes, this division appears to have an extremely broad scope, with a high number of direct reporting relationships (span of control) to the Assistant Deputy Minister. However, we believe that several of these administrative units are currently well managed, while others should require little day-to-day attention. It is also possible that the next level of analysis will indicate that some consolidation of administrative units is warranted.

We recommend that the Field Administration Officers be called Financial Administration Officers to more accurately reflect their function, and that they all be located in Central Office as a central resource pool. Although their visits to, and liaison with, people in the field are necessary and valuable, retaining the central "pool" will make optimum use of them as a resource and provides for appropriate functional management.

4. Assistant Deputy Minister, Planning, Policy and Evaluation

Under the proposed structure, this Assistant Deputy Minister would be responsible for administrative units called Planning, Policy, Legislation, Information Systems, Student Evaluation, and Evaluation. The functional units included in this group are intended to be "output oriented". Research has not been identified as a separate functional unit because we feel that research would be an element of the work of each of the areas identified.

This division is intended to serve as the key linking mechanism arm for the entire organization. The Assistant Deputy Minister would assume the responsibility for coordinating all internal linking mechanisms. Identifying a division as a linking mechanism coordinator is key to meeting the objectives identified earlier in this report. It is important to recognize that this is a facilitating or catalytic role, which does not detract from the authority or decision-making ability of the other Assistant Deputy Ministers. Rather, it is intended to promote integration among those with decision-making responsibilities.

The management of special projects would be the responsibility of this division. A special project would normally be assigned for management purposes to one of the functional units or directly to the Assistant Deputy Minister. Staffing of such projects would generally be on a temporary basis, drawing on the best resources available inside and outside the Department. Several of these administrative units would likely not have many full-time staff, but a high number of temporarily assigned staff, or an on-going movement in and out of functional areas to meet current project needs. With regard to the staffing of projects, including those of an evaluation nature, we recommend that the Department consider school jurisdictions as sources. An example such as the Hospital Accreditation Program demonstrates the value of inter-institutional transfer of views, ideas, and approaches.

We believe that Student Evaluation should be functionally and administratively separate from program development or delivery, and therefore that it be assigned to this division.

We also believe that a Legislation unit should be established within this division. This does not mean that all legislation-related work would be done by staff of this unit. Rather all legislation-related material would pass through this unit, to ensure that all required consultation had been carried out and that all legitimate concerns had been taken into account.

The need for increased attention to strategic planning has been identified earlier. We believe that strategic planning is a key responsibility of senior management, comprised of the Deputy and the four Assistants. A division such as this cannot and should not be seen as developing departmental plans (annual or strategic), but rather as facilitating planning processes.

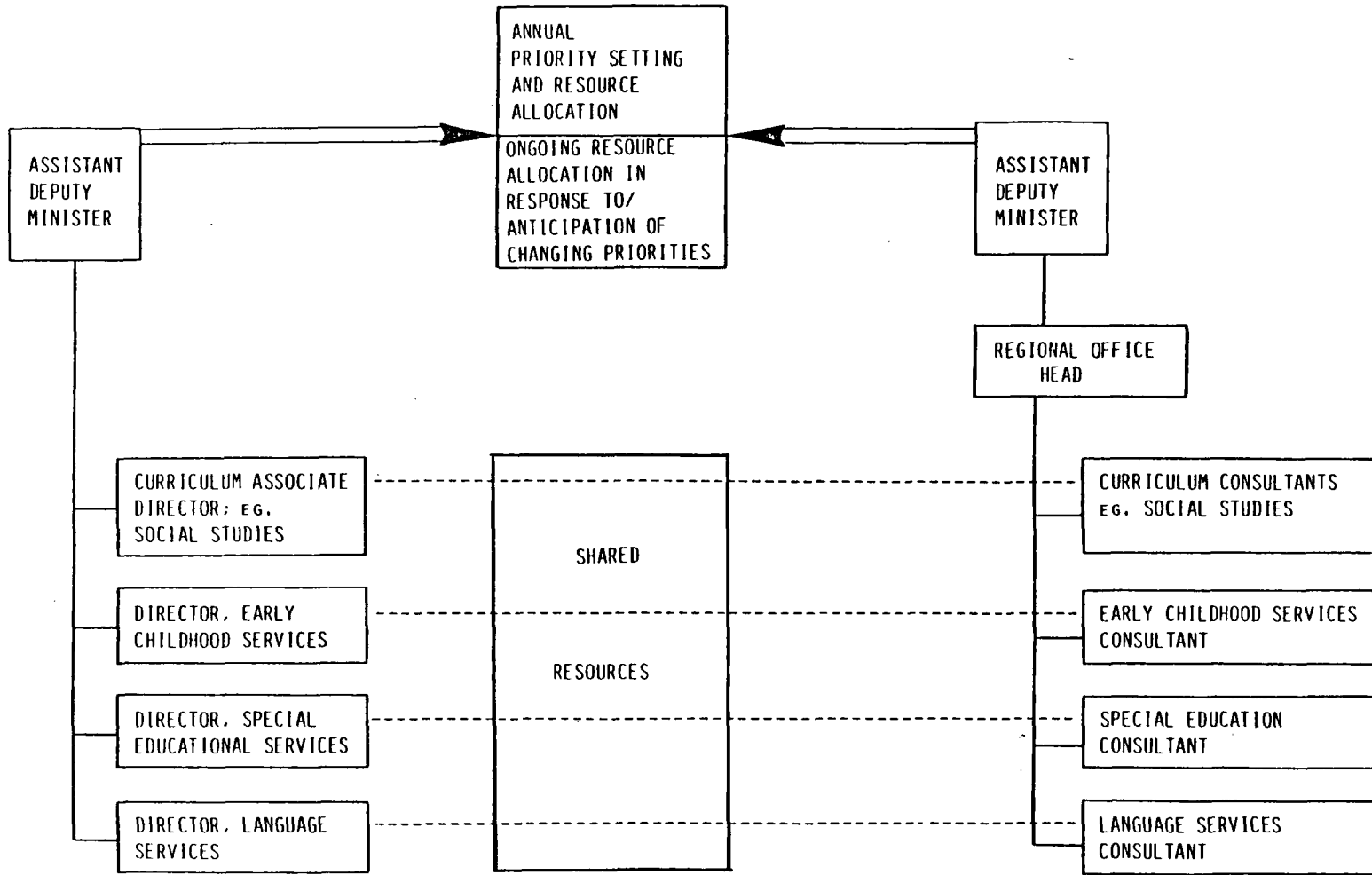
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The reorganization of functional areas as recommended will not meet all of the key objectives identified, particularly those related to quick response to a dynamic environment in terms of resource allocation. We have therefore developed specific recommendations regarding management and coordination between the Educational Program Development and Educational and Teacher Services Delivery division.

Our proposal in this regard is depicted in Exhibit V. Essential is the notion that resources (human, financial, and other) are shared by the two divisions, rather than "owned" by the administrative units or the divisions. That is, while an individual reports for on-going management purposes to an administrative unit head, he or she may often work on a temporary or project basis for other managers.

Given the concept of shared resources, it is the responsibility of the two divisions and the senior management of the Department to develop an annual plan of priorities, which is the basis for determining the allocation of resources. For example, the existence of an administrative unit responsible for curriculum development in a subject area does not mean that development activity in that subject will necessarily take place every year. Also important is the notion that priorities and resources allocations can be changed during the course of a year, and that corresponding changes in individual plans (MPAS) will be made.

We also propose the establishment of functional responsibility for program or subject areas with the managers within Educational Program Development. For example, the Associate Director, Social Studies would have a responsibility for participating in planning and monitoring social studies related work in the Regional Offices as well as in Central Office. This is much like the functional responsibility of a finance director within areas in which he has no direct management control. We believe that this approach will ensure better coordination of effort between Central Office and Regional Staff, and within program areas (similar to what exists now within Early Childhood Services). Such an arrangement should also enhance the professional development and stimulation of Regional Office staff.



We recognize that this approach adds an element of complexity to Departmental structure and management. We do believe that this complexity is essential to achieving Departmental objectives and that the Department is capable of implementing such a model. It does, however, represent a change in thinking and approach, and a program of staff and management orientation will be required for successful implementation.

VII IMPLEMENTATION

It is important to state that a decision on structural changes alone will not meet all of the key objectives identified in Section VI. Careful planning and execution of the implementation processes are essential. In this regard, we raise the following issues:

- * As indicated earlier, the model proposed is to a certain extent conceptual. The details of the structure, including allocation of staff to units, must now be developed.
- * Further study of linking mechanisms is required. In particular, processes and systems must be established to ensure that all those with a stake in decisions are involved in the consultative mechanisms. Further stakeholder involvement in the development of these mechanisms may be warranted.
- * The proposed reorganization is based upon a shift in management style and approach. Increased emphasis on information sharing and consultation in decision-making must be immediately evident.
- * Establishing the credibility of the new model, particularly with external groups, should be a priority for the Deputy Minister. We recommend that he devote particular attention to the two above points.
- * The notion of decentralization must be developed further. In particular, decisions must be made on what decision-making is to be decentralized, and to what levels. Consideration should be given to some decentralization to school jurisdictions. The development of internal control systems to meet requirements of decentralized decision-making must also receive high priority, and decentralization should not occur until these controls are in place.
- * We recommend continuation of the Steering Committee's work on goals and objectives to the point that there is formal adoption of a mission statement and goals. Work should then begin on "operationalizing" these goals to the administrative unit level.
- * In filling positions within the new structure, and in the future, there should be conscious attention to the need to strike a balance among:
 - . Optimum use of current personnel
 - . The need for "new blood"
 - . Management succession planning

- * Finally, we strongly support the notion of moving thoughtfully but quickly with the implementation of structural changes.

A P P E N D I X A

LIST OF ALBERTA EDUCATION
PERSONNEL INTERVIEWED

A P P E N D I X A

LIST OF ALBERTA EDUCATION

PERSONNEL INTERVIEWED

Deputy Minister, Dr. R. Bosetti
 Associate Deputy Minister - Instruction, Dr. J. Hrabí
 Associate Deputy Minister - Support, Dr. S. Odynak
 Director of Curriculum, Dr. G. Bevan
 Director of Early Childhood Services, Dr. H. Hastings
 Director of Field Services, Dr. E. Torgunrud
 Director of Special Educational Services, Dr. H. McLeod
 Director of School Buildings Administration, Dr. J. Kulba
 Director of Language Services, Dr. P. Lamoureux
 Director of Student Evaluation, Dr. L. Symrozum
 Director of Personnel Services, Mr. D. Pinkston
 Director of Finance, Statistics and Legislation, Dr. W. Duke
 Director of Planning and Research, Dr. M. Fenske
 Director of Communications, Ms. L. Lomax
 Director of Alberta Correspondence School, Mrs. A. Turnbull
 Coordinator of Educational Opportunities Fund, Mr. D. Ewasiuk
 Senior Librarian, Internal Library Services, Mrs. H. Skirrow
 Coordinator of Educational Exchange and Special Projects, Mr. H. Chamchuk
 Manager of School Book Branch, Mr. M. Fedorak
 Registrar, Dr. L. Rappel
 Coordinator of Edmonton Regional Office, Mr. N. Andruski
 ECS Consultant, Edmonton, Mr. J. Moffat
 Coordinator of Calgary Regional Office, Mr. W. Ede
 ECS Consultant, Calgary, Ms. P. Shanahan
 Coordinator of Grande Prairie Regional Office, Mr. S. Cymbol
 ECS Consultant, Grande Prairie, Mr. K. Pidwysocki
 Coordinator of Lethbridge Regional Office, Mr. M. Bruce
 ECS Consultant, Lethbridge, Ms. G. Levitt
 Coordinator of Red Deer Regional Office, Mr. C. Emard
 ECS Consultant, Red Deer, Mr. A. Rich
 Several subject area consultants in Regional Offices were also interviewed

A P P E N D I X B

LIST OF ALBERTA EDUCATION
STAKEHOLDER GROUP REPRESENTATIVES INTERVIEWED

A P P E N D I X B

LIST OF ALBERTA EDUCATION
STAKEHOLDER GROUP REPRESENTATIVES INTERVIEWED

President, Alberta Catholic School Trustee's Association
President, Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations
President, Alberta Teachers' Association
President, Association of School Business Officials in Alberta
President, Alberta School Trustees' Association
Chief Superintendent, Calgary Board of Education
Superintendent, Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School Board